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ABSTRACT

The reading teacher needs to choose students' reading goals carefully. This paper considers some of these possible goals, and states that, in the reading curriculum, the teacher needs to guide pupils to move upward on the cognitive level of objectives. The paper also states that pupils need to achieve well in the affective dimension of objectives, which involve the feeling and emotional aspects of learning. It suggests 10 ways that the teacher can help pupils develop positive attitudes toward the reading curriculum, including: having pupils listen to stories read by the teacher and discuss the subject matter; having a pupil select a library book to read for enjoyment; and allowing pupils in a committee to dramatize content read from a reading selection. The paper also discusses Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences and how it can be used in reading instruction. Finally, the paper discusses various philosophies of education which can be tied to reading instruction, including idealism, realism, experimentalism, existentialism, perennialism, and the "Big Book" philosophy. The paper concludes that pupils need to experience a match between their own preferences and learning styles with a specific plan of reading instruction. (NKA)

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Goals of Reading Instruction.

by Marlow Ediger

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GOALS OF READING INSTRUCTION

The reading teacher needs to choose goals carefully that pupils are to achieve. Each goal needs to be weighed carefully before implementation in classroom teaching of reading. There are many goals from which to choose. It might well be that a specific pupil needs to attain other goals than what the rest of the class is focused upon. Learners differ one from the other in terms of needs to be emphasized in teaching and learning situations. The first kind of goal to emphasize is cognitive ends. Cognitive ends stress that which emphasizes mental operations, thought, application, comparisons and contrasts made, or use of the mind in general. These kinds of goals can be identified at different levels of complexity. Certainly, the reading teacher wants pupils to be able to remember what has been read. Why? Otherwise, the teacher cannot have pupils build on what has been retained. This means that a pupil cannot stop with merely being a word caller in reading. He/she must also understand and attach meaning pertaining to words read. Pupils need to be challenged in discussions to reveal quality comprehension from reading. Unless pupils can state what has been read in their very own words and also be able to answer questions covering ideas read, they have not moved higher toward different levels of cognition. Once pupils understand and comprehend what has been read, they are now able to use information acquired. The level of knowledge use is salient in that pupils need to apply what has been learned. Unless ideas gleaned can be applied to a new situation or to problem areas, the act of reading might have limited values.

Higher up in cognition, the pupil needs to be able to analyze subject matter read. This might well mean to separate content into component parts. The analyzing may include separating facts from opinions, accurate from inaccurate ideas, and relevant from irrelevant content. Making contrasts and comparisons also stresses analyzing in the cognitive domain.

Analyzed content should be followed with a joining together or

fusion of ideas. With fusion, the content is put back together again after selected elements have been omitted, such as inaccurate ideas or irrelevant subject matter. With analysis having been completed, the learner is now ready to use the fused subject matter to solve a problem. The subject matter, however, must be relevant for the problem being solved. Ediger (1997, vol, 34, nr.2) wrote the following:

A variety of reading materials may be used in a problem solving curriculum. The role of the reading teacher is to motivate students to identify problems within the framework of a stimulating environment. After a problem has been clearly identified, related information is gathered to solve the identified problem. Library books, basal reading textbooks, encyclopedias, pamphlets, brochures, among other reading materials, are used to gather data. Audio-visual materials, including software packages, may also be used in data gathering.

Based on the data, a hypothesis is developed in answer to the problem. The hypothesis is tentative and not an absolute. With further reading experiences, as well as use of audio-visual materials, the student with teacher guidance tests the hypothesis.

Fusion may also involve creating new ideas. The novel, the unique, and the original may come about when gaps are perceived in knowledge. For example, in writing poetry, the pupil needs to achieve novel ideas and fuse content resulting in a couplet, triplet, quatrain, limerick, haiku, tanka, and/or a diamante.

Generally, the highest level of the cognitive domain is appraisal. Here, the learner has designed criteria to use in appraising the quality of oral reading, a written folklore, a puppetry presentation, and/or a dramatization.

In the reading curriculum, the teacher needs to guide pupils to move upward and higher on the cognitive level of objectives.

Affective Objectives

Pupils need to achieve well in affective dimension of objectives. The objectives involve the feeling and emotional aspects of learning.

Certainly if pupils feel positively about learning, they will attain at a higher rate as compared to having negative beliefs about and pertaining to reading. Pupils who like to read will do more reading and do a better job of accessing information than those having a lack of positive responses. There are numerous ways in helping pupils develop positive attitudes toward the reading curriculum. Among others, the following are important:

1. listening to interesting stories read by the teacher to pupils and discussing in a fascinating manner the inherent subject matter.
2. pupils in a collaborative relationship reading collectively and sharing ideas from content read.
3. learners, individually or in committees, identifying and solving problems from a given reading selection.
4. the pupil selecting a library book to read for enjoyment.
5. pupils in a committee dramatizing content read from a reading selection.
6. learners making and developing a bulletin board display to encourage pupils reading of library books.
7. pupils making a collage or mural pertaining to contents read in a library or text book.
8. pupils doing journal writing and including personal feelings and interests pertaining to the library book read.
9. learners selecting books to read from a learning station whereby there are an adequate number of diverse titles and the books are on diverse reading levels to provide for individual differences.
10. pupils choosing how they wish to be evaluated after reading a specific library book (Ediger, 1997, vol. 34, nr.1).

Multiple Intelligences

Howard Gardner (1993) identified nine intelligences through which pupils may reveal what has been learned. These are: verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, musical, bodily/kinesthetic, the human condition, nature/science, interpersonal,

and intrapersonal.

Dr. Gardner recommends harmonizing what is taught with the individual pupil's intelligence. Most of reading instruction has involved verbal/linguistic intelligence. Thus the printed word and the use of real language makes for verbal/linguistic intelligence. What about bringing in the other eight intelligences so that more pupils may benefit from reading instruction? How might this be encouraged?

1. have library books on the interest center pertaining to diverse titles. Thus there should be library books on mathematics, architecture (visual/spatial intelligence), music such as history of great musicians, athletes and athletic endeavors for bodily/kinesthetic intelligence, as well as books on the natural sciences for pupils to read.

2. have pupils reveal what has been learned form reading using diverse means. Thus after having read a given selection, a pupil may report individually in a self chosen manner such as in intrapersonal intelligence. Pupils in a committee may have read the same selection and wish to report collectively such as in interpersonal intelligence. Additional ways to reveal what has been learned from reading a library book or a selection from a textbook may include (a) making an art scene such as in visual/spatial intelligence, (b) revealing musical content read by writing related words and lyrics of the pupils very own thinking, (c) planning and preforming a dance routine pertaining to content read, (d) writing selected mathematics problems for classmates to solve based on content in the library book With the eighth intelligence identified by Gardner, namely, nature and the natural world, pupils might develop a diorama based on reading about volcanoes, as an example.

Multiple intelligences emphasize that pupils may read content based on their interests and strengths as well as show what has been learned through one of more of the intelligences. Thus evaluation procedures based on standardized or criterion referenced tests is not adequate. These tests tend to evaluate pupil learning in terms of verbal/linguistic intelligences. Their are eight other intelligences then that are not being used. Teachers and test writers need to be fair to all

pupils in that bias needs to be eliminated with the use of standardized and criterion referenced testing. All intelligences identified by Gardner need nurturing and yet, at the same time, pupils need ample opportunities to use their strengths in the reading curriculum (Ediger, 1997, The Progress of Education).

Philosophy of Reading Instruction

There are different philosophies of education which might assist the reading teacher in the selection of objectives. Philosophy emphasizes looking at values, beliefs, and strands of thought pertaining to the reading curriculum as well as other academic areas.

1. Idealism is one of the older schools of thought in reading instruction. Idealists tend to believe that one can only receive ideas of the natural//social world and not know the real world as it truly is. Idealism stressed an idea centered world. Thus pupils achieving vital concepts and generalizations pertaining to content read is important. A challenging discussion of ideas read also enhances the concept of "idealism." The idealist teacher emphasizes the abstract more so than the concrete when pupils read and discuss content. The concrete, if used as readiness activities, is to assist pupils to achieve more readily in the abstract with relevant concepts and generalizations.

Idealists tend to believe that the mind is real and needs to be developed with the academic and the intelligible. The teacher then needs to guide pupils to focus upon valid concepts and generalizations in a subject centered reading curriculum. Ediger (1995) wrote:

Idealists tend to be very academic and rigorous in the teaching of subject matter. They emphasize cognitive objectives much more so than affective (attitudinal) or psychomotor (use of muscles and eye-hand coordination) in teaching-learning situations. Meaning, understanding, and depth learning of subject matter are important to idealists. Vital subject matter, carefully selected, needs to be taught to students. The student in acquiring subject matter in ongoing lessons is to move from the finite to the infinite Being. Ideas are important to attain in an

idealist's curriculum. The ideal is also important to achieve in terms of moral standards and values.

2. Somewhat opposite of idealism as a philosophy of teaching is realism. Since one can know the real world in whole or in part as it really is in realism, pupils should focus their attention in choosing library books which stress science and mathematics. Realists then believe the pupil can know the real world as it truly is, in degrees. Thus, the reader can obtain somewhat of a duplicate of the real world in actuality. This is quite different as compared to the idealist who believes the pupil might secure ideas only/largely of the material/social world. Wahlquist (1942) wrote:

Realists generally agree in stressing the need of making philosophy scientific. A major part of the realistic program of reform consists of emphasizing the close relationship of of philosophy to the sciences. There are those who think that the proper procedure for philosophy is to use the method of abstraction perfected in mathematics and made the basis of all scientific investigation. Generally, realists are agreed that the method of scientific analysis is the fundamental approach. The ultimate determinate of the truth of an idea is regarded as something beyond mere personal satisfaction, something external to the personality, and not dependent upon it. Consequently, truth must be discovered by objective means, as free as possible from the subjectivity of the experimenter. The realist is interested in the temperature of the room as registered by a gadget, not by the impression of the person in the room.

The realist teacher needs to have an ample supply of library books available for pupils to read about the natural world of science and of mathematics. These two academic disciplines are interesting and fascinating to many pupils. Precise information may be read pertaining to each of these two disciplines of knowledge. Realism harmonizes well with the measurably stated objectives movement. Thus, prior to

instruction, precise objectives have been developed on the state and/or local levels.The curriculum areas of social studies and literature are also included in developing measurably stated objectives for pupils to achieve. Since precise information is inherent, the teacher might develop criterion reference tests to measure pupil achievement in reading content pertaining to the diverse academic areas. Measurably stated objectives chosen by the teacher or on the state level may be selected for pupils to attain. The objectives are precise so that either the pupil has or has not achieved the stated objectives after instruction. The objectives to be achieved pertaining to each lesson may be announced prior to instruction so that pupils individually know what is expected of them in terms of knowledge to be acquired. After instruction, it can be measured how well each pupil has achieved. The realist teacher of reading might well have the following model to use in teaching:

a) behaviorally stated objectives for pupils to achieve.

b) literature for pupil reading to achieve the precise objectives.

c) criterion referenced test to measure pupil progress.

3. A third school of thought in educational philosophy which provides guidance to teachers is experimentalism. Experimentalists believe that individuals cannot know the real world as it truly is, nor can individuals know ideas only pertaining to the real world. What can be known are the experiences of the individual(s). We can then only know experiences. With experiences, one experiences change and modification. Thus, problems arise in a changing environment subject to one's own experiences. Problems encountered need identification and clarity in their being stated. After clearly stating a relevant problem, information from a variety of reference sources need to be obtained in answer to the identified problem area. An hypothesis should result. The stated hypothesis is tentative and subject to testing. Again, reference source need to be used to do the testing in a life-like situation. Reading activities are a useful set of experiences to provide a source for problems, gathering information, developing an hypothesis, testing the hypothesis, and modifying the hypothesis if necessary. Pertaining to

John Dewey, a leading philosopher of education embracing experimentalism, Meyer (1949) wrote:

For Dewey...thinking becomes significant only when applied to life's situations. It is, he has said, "an instrumentality used...in adjusting ...to the practical situations in life." Or, to phrase it more simply, human beings think in order to live. Because of this stimulus, which has its basis in biology and sociology, it is impossible---it is absurd---to interpret life in a systematic and abstract way. Since, moreover, Dewey holds that life is in a constant flux, it is impossible to solve problems with any degree of finality for the problems of tomorrow will be different from those of today.

As for the purpose of knowledge, Dewey believes that knowledge is experience and that true knowledge is functional.

4. A fourth philosophy providing guidance to the teacher in the reading curriculum is existentialism. Existentialists tend to emphasize the human condition with its uncertainties, anxieties, tension, fears, and dread. For example, may late mother had a devastating stroke when I was in the fifth grade in May, 1939. She was in a vegetative state until she died in 1961 with extreme limitations during these 22 years to think, converse, walk, and interact with others.

Existentialists tend to advocate that choices made are subjective. The individual chooses from among alternatives as to what to value, prize, pursue, and achieve. The individual is the chooser. Permitting someone else to make personal decisions for the self makes the latter inhuman. To be human means to choose and select, from among the many decisions possible. Harper (1955) wrote the following pertaining to existentialism:

Existentialism is, as the word implies, a philosophy of human existence It arose early in the nineteenth century in response to a cultural climate in which Soren Kierkegarrd observed that man had forgotten what it means to exist. Men had learned what it means to be

one in the crowd, to be a mass-man; they had forgotten what it means to be an individual, that is, what it means to die, to suffer, to decide, to love. They had forgotten what it means to stand apart, as each man is born to stand apart, from the rest of the universe and from one's fellows...

Individualized reading would work well here since the pupil selects which library book to read, from among alternatives. There should be an ample supply of library books dealing with the human condition from which a pupil may choose one to read. The library books should be on diverse topics and on diverse reading levels to provide for individual differences--fast, average, and slow readers.

After the pupil has completed reading a library book, he/she should have a conference with the teacher to appraise achievement. The conference needs to center on the concerns and situations involving the human being.

5. A fifth philosophy of teaching reading involves perennialism. Perennialists believe in looking to the past in selecting objectives for reading instruction. their purpose is to have pupils read ideas that have endured in time and space. Good ideas then remain important in the past as well as continue to possess importance presently. The Great Books represent enduring ideas from the past which are relevant today. Content written presently may not survive in time and space and thus become obsolete. There are many books which pupils may red that stresses the Great Books philosophy. Mother Goose rhymes is an example of books for young readers which has remained important over the centuries. When I was in the first grade, I read over and over again "The Little Red Hen." This story goes back in time as to when it was written and today's primary grade pupils still love the content of "The

Little Red Hen." On the seventh grade level, I truly enjoyed reading "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens. When briefly outlining selected books for pupil reading emphasizing perennialism as a philosophy of teaching reading, high school juniors and seniors read selected works of Shakespeare such as Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet, and The Merchant of Venice. As a high school student, one of my favorite selections studied in English was Shakespeare's Julius Caesar.

Achieving well intellectually is a major goal of Perennialists. Lively discussions are advocated whereby pupils are thoughtfully involved in the ongoing activity. The teacher must be a good leader of discussion groups and not lecture to students. He/she needs to ask challenging questions of pupils when serving as a discussion leader. The teacher needs to be an admirer of classical literature and be well versed therein. Pupils should enjoy reading due to relevant classical content and the interesting related discussions that follow.

In the Junior Great Books Curriculum, students have many opportunities to interact with thought provoking literature as they develop their reading, writing, oral communication, and critical thinking skills. Because of the curriculum's emphasis upon discussion and its focus upon interpretation, all students--whether or not they are reading at grade level--will be able to contribute, and will grow in their ability to read and enjoy challenging literature.

The Junior Great books Curriculum develops student's reading comprehension in the context of thinking about genuine problems of meaning raised by a selection. The curriculum's interpretive activities are designed to help students to become more aware of their reactions as they read, develop a sensitivity to language, and value their own curiosity about a text. Writing--from simple note taking to the composition of elaborated essays--is stressed throughout the Curriculum as an integral part of students' ongoing, personal engagement with the text.

The shared inquiry method of reading and discussion developed by the Great Books foundation enables teachers to create a thoughtful

learning environment in the classroom. Through their own curiosity and attentive questioning, teachers serve as partners in inquiry with their students, helping then work together to discover meaning in a selection and build interpretations (The Junior Great Books Foundation, no date).

Pertaining to perennialism, O'Neill (1981) wrote:

Accordingly, educational intellectualism tends to be past orientated and to emphasize stability-- the continuity of the great, enduring ideas --over change. In general, the eternal truths are best represented in the abiding masterworks of the world's greatest minds as these ideas are conveyed through the cultural heritage of mankind. The overall goal of education is to identify, preserve and transmit essential Truth (that is, the central principles that govern the underlying meaning and significance of life). More significantly, the intermediate role of the school as a particular social institution is to teach and the students how to think (that is, wisdom) of the past.

6. A sixth approach in teaching reading is using the Big Book philosophy. Holistic methods of reading instruction are involved here. A large, illustrated book needs to be present for primary grade pupils. This book is large enough for pupils to be able to read the print from their desks. Should the book be smaller in size, pupils can be seated closer to the book in order that all may read the contents together orally. The teacher, first of all, discusses the illustrations that relate to the print with learners. This process builds readiness within pupils for reading the abstract words directly related to the illustrations. The teacher reads the contents orally first to pupils. Pupils and the teacher together then orally read the printed content. Those who have difficulties with word identification may hear the words pronounced as the short selection is read together with pupil-teacher involvement. The contents may also be reread to practice reading the words and comprehending the subject matter. Rereading can be an excellent procedure to use in teaching and learning situations. Many pupils love to reread stories. Pupils than learn to identify words and comprehend syntax in sentences. Sequential big books involving holism may be read

together involving pupils and the teacher.

There can be some phonics taught as the need arises, but this is not done in isolation from the context of the story. Enjoyment of reading is a major goal and this is emphasized as a holistic experience. With rereading, slower learners may also master the identification of words. If there is a refrain that is predicable when the teacher reads orally to pupils, the latter may join in with what is known as echoic reading.

Holistic methods of teaching reading may be compared with a strong phonics approach. A phonics method of teaching young learners stresses sequential lessons in guiding pupils to make associations between graphemes and phonemes that can then be used in reading content in different curriculum areas.

Writing is very closely related to reading in a holistic literature based curriculum. Thus pupils may write the following, as examples, in journal writing when responding to what was been read:

1. feelings the reader had toward the selection read.
2. modifications to the major character described in the reading selection.
3. revisions to the setting of the story.
4. letter written to the author of the story.
5. elaboration of the plot of the reading selection.

Conclusion

Pupils need to experience a match between their own preferences and learning styles with a specific plan of reading instruction. Too frequently, the basal reading approach is used in teaching pupils. This plan will meet the needs of some pupils. Others will need a different approach. The psychology of learning needs to be used to guide pupils to achieve as optimally as possible in reading. Each plan of reading instruction needs evaluation to determine if a pupil can benefit from it optimally. For all pupils not doing well in reading, I would suggest tape-recording interesting library books. Pupils may then follow along in these library books by looking at the words as the tape plays the related

content. Very slow learners then have a chance to read along in the library book with the recorded voice on the tape.

Reading Recovery is an excellent approach for young children who need a one on one approach in reading instruction. Thus when a pupil is reading from a library book, the teacher is there continuously to offer assistance and help. There is little time then for the pupil to waste time in reading.

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